

Appl. No. 09/998,514
Amdt. dated July 12, 2004
Reply to Office action of May 4, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action dated May 4, 2004, the Examiner: (1) entered a Restriction Requirement; (2) objected to the drawings; (3) rejected claims 1-4, 6-9, 11, 13, 20, 21, 23, and 25-27 as anticipated by PCT application WO 99/30243 (Pawlowski); and (4) concluded that dependent claims 5, 10, 12, 22 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In this Response, Applicant amends claims 1 and 20 and submits new claims 28-34. Based on the amendments and arguments contained herein, Applicant respectfully submits that this case is in condition for allowance.

I. RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Applicant hereby affirms the election of the Group I claims (claims 1-13 and 20-27), withdraws claims 14-19 for further consideration in this case, and may file the withdrawn claims in a divisional application.

II. DRAWING OBJECTION

The Examiner objected to the alleged failure of the drawings to show an "output device coupled to said CPUs" as recited in claim 1. According to the Examiner, Figure 1 shows an output device coupled to the south bridge, not the CPUs. As defined in the "Notation and Nomenclature" section of Applicant's disclosure, the term "couple" includes either a direct or indirect electrical connection. "Thus, if a first device couples to a second device, that connection may be through a direct electrical connection, or through an indirect electrical connection via other devices and connections." Applicant's disclosure, page 5. On this basis, Applicant disagrees with the Examiner interpretation of claim 1. At any rate, Applicant deletes the "output device" from claim 1 because the output device is not considered necessary for patentability.

III. THE ART REJECTIONS

Applicant amends claim 1 to require that the system resource is allocated to "a CPU from among a plurality of the CPUs that request access to said system resource." This limitation is in contrast to Pawlowski. As correctly observed by the Examiner, Pawlowski is directed to assigning an interrupt to one of a plurality of CPUs. The decision in Pawlowski as to which CPU is to service the interrupt

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seems to turn on which CPU is currently performing the lowest priority task. See Abstract and pages 1-3 and 6-8. Pawlowski does not appear to be directed to allocating a resource to a CPU from among a plurality of CPUs that request access to the resource. In Pawlowski, the CPUs do not request permission to service the interrupt nor do the CPUs request the interrupt to be performed. Rather, the interrupt is simply assigned to a CPU. For at least this reason, claim 1 and its dependent claims are patentable¹.

Method claim 20 requires, "receiving a plurality of cycle requests from a plurality of CPUs, each cycle request requesting access to a system resource on behalf of a CPU." The method further comprises "granting access to the system resource based, at least in part, on said task priorities." Pawlowski does not disclose this combination of acts. Instead, Pawlowski discloses receiving an interrupt request and assigning responsibility for servicing the interrupt to one of a plurality of CPUs. The CPUs, however, do not request the interrupt to be performed. Thus, Pawlowski does not disclose receiving requests for a system resource from multiple CPUs and granting access to the resource based on task priorities received from the CPUs. For at least this reason, claim 20 and its dependent claims are patentable.

IV. NEW CLAIMS 28-34

The Examiner concluded that the subject matter of claims 5, 10, and 12 is not disclosed in the art of record. Applicant submits new claims 28-34 which focus on the subject matter of claims 5, 10, and 12. Claim 28, for example, includes that which the Examiner found to be patentable about claim 5. Similarly, claim 31 includes the allowable subject matter from claim 10 and claim 33 includes the allowable subject matter from claim 12. Accordingly, the Examiner should find claims 28-34 to be allowable at least for the same reasons claims 5, 10 and 12 were found to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

¹ "When deciding" was replaced with "to decide" merely to clarify the claim language and not in response to a rejection or for reasons of patentability. Also, a typographical error in claim 4 has been corrected.

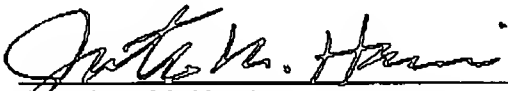
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V. CONCLUSION

In the course of the foregoing discussions, Applicant may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. Moreover, it should be understood that there may be other distinctions between the claims and the cited art which have yet to be raised, but which may be raised in the future.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any fees or time extensions are inadvertently omitted or if any fees have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit those fees to Hewlett-Packard Company Deposit Account Number 08-2025 and enter any time extension(s) necessary to prevent this case from being abandoned.

Respectfully submitted,


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